

# **MISSISSIPPI WIRELESS COMMUNICATION COMMISSION**

## **December 4, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

Place: MDOT Auditorium

### **Commission Members Present:**

MS Department of Corrections  
MS Dept of Public Safety  
MS National Guard  
MS Department of Environmental Quality  
MS Department of Transportation  
MS Fire Chief's Association  
MS Department of Homeland Security  
MS Department of Information Technology Services  
MS Municipal League  
Safe City  
MS Department of Health  
MS Supervisors Association

Christopher Epps  
Michael Berthay  
William Freeman  
Keith Harkins  
Willie Huff  
Tom Lariviere  
Jay Ledbetter  
David Litchliter  
Knox Ross  
Joseph McArthur  
Mike Lucius  
Joel Yelverton

### **Advisory Members Present:**

Senator Nickey Browning  
Senator Dean Kirby  
Senator Nolan Mettetal  
Representative Ray Rogers

Chairman Epps called the meeting to order and welcomed guests in attendance.

Chairman Epps called for a motion to approve the November minutes. A motion was made by Willie Huff and a second by Joseph McArthur. The motion passed with none opposed.

Chairman Epps expressed his appreciation to the Legislative Advisory Members at today's meeting. He welcomed two new members and asked them to introduce themselves. First was Mr. Joe McArthur with Safe City. Mr. McArthur introduced himself and stated that he is President of In Focus Technologies which is a custom software development firm in Jackson. He also stated he has served on Safe City for several years. Next was Mr. Mike Lucius, Director, Office of Health Administration for the Mississippi the Department of Health.

Chairman Epps continued with the Committee Reports. Chairman Epps recognized Joel Yelverton from the Procurement Review Committee, who had one request requiring full commission review and action. The request was from the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) in the amount of \$413,670 for a six-month extension of Verizon's Field Force Management Services which track individual case workers as they do their jobs throughout the state. Cellular South has provided a letter stating that their technology to do this is not up and running but planned for second quarter 2009. The floor was then opened for questions. Mr.

Yelverton made a motion for approval in the amount of \$413,670. Tom Lariviere seconded the motion and it passed with none opposed.

Chairman Epps then recognized Willie Huff with the Governance/Interoperability Committee who stated that the WCC staff and Homeland Security have been working on the requirements for the Public Safety Interoperability Communications Grant (PSIC) The WCC plans by January to begin a series of meetings with local agencies interested in applying for the grant. Notices will be sent out and commission members will be copied in case you would like to attend meetings in your home areas. We want the meetings completed by the end of January so we can begin assisting interested counties with analysis of their interoperability needs. This Committee will be meeting with counties and discussing any ongoing issues. We plan to report in January and February regarding the rules and guidelines needed to get these folks involved in our communications system.

With the Chairman's approval, Mr. Huff proceeded into the Project Update in the absence of Mr. Bill Roach. Mr. Roach is attending a conference of State Interoperability Coordinators in Orlando. Currently there are tower and building inspections taking place. There are 19 towers with buildings and electronics at the sites. There are about 14 sites in single site trunking. We're pushing for a early spring date on microwaves being connected and MSWIN being operational in Phase 1A which is the Coast, up around Hattiesburg and goes up toward Waynesboro and Laurel in that area of the State. The tower acquisition is ongoing. There are two paths being developed to connect Phase 1A to Jackson. Mr. Huff asked if there were any questions and reminded everyone that they had an invitation to go to Mobile, AL next week for a three state conference on interoperability. The conference is a continuing effort for the three states to coordinate what is going on between borders and in the states. There were no questions for Mr. Huff.

Chairman Epps recognized the executive director of the Gulf States Regional Center for Public Safety Innovations (GSRCPi), Daphne Levenson, and expressed his appreciation for her taking time out of her busy schedule to come visit with them. Ms. Levenson encouraged attendance for the conference while understanding there are many timing conflicts this time of the year. Attendance is extremely important. She stated that conversations on interoperability plans need to happen across the Gulf Coast between Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. She also stated that all three states wrote GSRCPi into their DHS Funding plans and GSRCPi is referenced specifically many times. GSRCPi's goal is that the three states are the national model that everybody looks at for interstate cooperation. Ms. Levenson offered conference information to anyone interested and again encouraged attendance. Chairman Epps stated that he had a copy of the agenda for the conference for anyone needing one. There were no questions.

Chairman Epps continued with the other agenda items. He recognized Director Litchlitter who had a report for approval of expenditures. Mr. Litchlitter made reference to the report that was distributed. The DPS sub-grant that we started with was \$17 million, expenditures for November were \$248,000 out of that grant. Our current balance remaining on that \$17 million grant is \$237,349 and some cents, so we've just about expired the entire grant. Most of our expenditures now are coming out of the \$20 million in bond funding approved by the Legislature. Of that, \$10 million has been sold by the Bond Commission. We have requested that the Bond Commission to be prepared to sell another \$10 million at the next bond sale in April. Mr. Litchlitter said of the

total revenue to date of about \$27 million; we've got about \$7.8 million remaining. We have about \$1.5 million in bills that are due in December. Therefore, we're really down to about \$6.5 million. He mentioned that our Homeland Security grant of \$20 million will hopefully be approved soon. There were no extraordinary expenditures, most of these are operational in nature. Chairman Epps asked if there were any questions and there were none. He then asked for a motion to pay the bill. Joel Yelverton made a motion to approve with a second from Keith Harkins. Motion passed with none opposed.

Mr. Litchliter then referenced a Commission vote from about a year ago to reimburse MDOT for a contractual expenditure with Buford Goff and Associates that helped the whole project get started. They helped us with the RFP, evaluation, and contracting efforts with the cost being about \$982,000. Going through one of the pre-audits at the federal level there were some questions about that reimbursement as far as qualifying for expenditure under that particular grant. Mr. Litchliter recommended that the 982,000 that had been reimbursed to MDOT, be taken from our Bond fund and restored to the grant fund. We will then spend the grant money on additional project expenses. Otherwise once the grant is closed, which will be at the end of this month, the federal audit will result in our being asked to repay that \$982,000 because it was not listed by them as a qualified expense. Mike Lucius had a question regarding whether the bond funding allowed this as an expense. Mr. Litchliter stated that the bond language is very broad and open and basically says you can spend it on whatever it takes to get the project done but not in those exact words. Mr. Lucius made a motion that this transfer of funds be approved once DFA legal counsel was consulted to make sure we were staying within laws of the bond funding. Jay Ledbetter seconded the motion. Chairman Epps asked if there was any discussion. He recognized Keith Harkins who asked what precise reason the expenditure was disallowed. Mr. Litchliter stated that Chairman Huff could probably answer that question better since Mr. Huff wrote the justification that went to the Feds. Mr. Huff stated it was a timing issue. Commissioner Epps asked again for any other questions. He then stated that everyone had heard the motion and second. The motion passed with none opposed and Mr. Huff abstaining.

Mr. Litchliter had one additional item for information, not needing action. The WCC had our first land lease. We leased some land from Cellular South to build a tower. According to statute, DFA has authority for all land leases but the WCC statute gives the WCC has authority for land leases. We met with Kevin Upchurch and the PPRB yesterday to develop a plan to meet all the statute and not slow the project down. The WCC will complete our own land leases and report, after the fact, to DFA for them to ratify our action. This plan covers both DFA and the WCC and we won't have any holdups on paying land lease bills anymore. Chairman Epps opened the floor for questions but there were none.

Chairman Epps then asks if there is any other business. There being no other business he calls on Chairman Huff for the adoption for the January 8, 2009, meeting date. Chairman Huff makes the motion that they change the January 1, 2009, meeting to January 8, 2009, at 1:30 PM in the MDOT Auditorium. David Litchliter seconded the motion which passed with none opposed.

Chairman Epps requested a motion to adjourn. William Freeman made the motion with a second by Willie Huff. The motion passed with none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 2:10 PM.